

**REMARKS**

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-4 and 6-13 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4, 6, 7 and 13 are the independent claims.

Claim 5 has been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 4, and 6 have been have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Initially, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 7-13 are allowed and that claims 2, 3, and 5 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Applicants have not amended any of allowed claims 7-13 and respectfully submit that these claims should remain allowed. Also, by the present Amendment, Applicants have respectfully maintained claims 2 and 3 in dependent form because it is believed that their respective base claims, as amended, patentably define the present invention over the citations of record.

Claims 1 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the method of preventing an adjacent track erase effect described in the Background of the Invention section of Applicants' disclosure ("the conventional method") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,381,086 (Koenig et al.). Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the conventional method in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,798,598 (Suzuki et al.). All rejections are respectfully traversed.

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants have amended independent claim 4 to patentably define their invention by including of the features of cancelled claim 5, which claim was indicated as reciting patentable subject matter.

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 6 patentably define their invention by amending these claims to include features based on those identified in the Office Action as imparting patentability to independent claim 7.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of independent claims 1, 4, and 6 are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the independent claims patentably define the present invention over the citations of record. Further, the dependent claims should also be allowable for the same reasons as their respective base claims and further due to the additional features that they recite. Separate and individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants believe that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action. However, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to such matters.

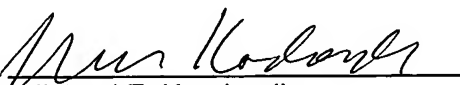
There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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